Monday, Nov. 6, 10:30 1713

20 young women in the cast, in ancient, medieval, + oriental costumes

EACH IN THEIR MOTHER TONGUE

CALL TO WORSHIP (Voice of History, reading)

There is One, the only one of all the human race, Who becomes as it were a native wherever He comes to be truly known. His Olivet is wherever faith in Him is born, His Galilee is wherever love for Him is cherished. In Him, East and West that can never meet, do meet - in Him alone, and in no other. Let Him come and make His abode in Labrador or New Guinea, on the Ganges or the Congo, and He becomes a Brother indeed, of the people's very kith and kin. He speaks in every language as though it were His mother tongue. "Come unto me all ye who labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest" -- the One who first said those words was broadcasting for the whole world. And because He loved the whole world, He knows how to win the ear of the whole world. He was broadcasting for all continents and islands. When I listen on the wireless to what is spoken in German, it is German; in French, it is French. But when I listen "in the Spirit" - a far kinder and quieter wireless - to the voice from the hillside of Galilee, and the shore of the Syrian Sea, He speaks in my mother tongue. But so He speaks also in a thousand languages and dialects in all parts of the earth. For on the morning of Pentecost was born a universal language - the language of a Perfect Teacher of Perfect Love."

(-Elvet Lewis; London, 1933. Introduction to "Book of a Thousand Tongues".

Entire Audience, reading:

"How hear we, every man in his own tongue wherein he was born, the wonderful works of God?" (-Acts 2:8)

HYMN (Tune 188; Audience singing)

O Word of God incarnate, O Wisdom from on high,
O Truth unchanged, unchanging, O Light of our dark sky;
We praise Thee for the radiance that from the hallowed page,
A lantern to our footsteps, shines on from age to age.

RESPONSE (Voice of History, reading)

How many ages and generations
Have brooded and wept and agonized
Over this Book!
What untellable joys and ecstacies,
What support to martyrs at the stake!
To what myriads has it been
The shore and rock of safety -
The refuge from the driving tempest and wreck.
Translated into all languages,
How it has united this diverse world!
Of its thousands there is not a verse,
Not a word, but is thick-studded
With human emotion. (Walt Whitman)

Entire Audience, reading:

How hear we, every man in his own tongue wherein he was born, the wonderful works of God? (-Acts 2:8)

HYMN (Tune 188; Audience singing)

The Church from her dear Master received the gift divine,
And still that light she lifteth o'er all the earth to shine;
It is the golden casket where gems of truth are stored;
It is the heaven-drawn picture of Christ, the living Word.

RESPONSIVE READING: "Search The Scriptures"

Extreme Left Aisle: Then said Jesus unto them: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." (-John 5:39)

Left Center Aisle: And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto Him the Book of the prophet Isaiah; and when He had opened the Book, he found the place where it was written:

Right Center Aisle: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Extreme Right Aisle: And He closed the Book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him.

Extreme Left Aisle: And He began to say unto them: "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

Left Center Aisle: And all bare witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said: "Is not this Joseph's son?" (-Luke 4:16:22)

Right Center Aisle: Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee. (-Psalm 119:11)

Extreme Right Aisle: The entrance of Thy Word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple. (-Psalm 119:130)

Extreme Left Aisle: I rejoice at Thy Word as one that findeth great spoil. (-Psalm 119:162)

Left Center Aisle: Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wonderful things out of Thy law. I am a stranger in the earth; hide not Thy commandments from me. (-Psalm 119:18,19)

Right Center Aisle: For the Word of the Lord is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (-Hebrews 4:12)

Extreme Right Aisle: How hear we, every man in his own tongue wherein he was born, the wonderful works of God. (Acts 2:8)

Extreme Left Aisle: For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. (-Habakkuk 2;14)

Left Center Aisle: The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits. (-Daniel 11:32)

Right Center Aisle: The Lord giveth the Word: the women that publish the tidings are a great host. (-Psalm 68:11 Moffatt)

Extreme Right Aisle: Those women who labored with me in the gospel..... whose names are in the Book of Life. (-Philippians 4:3)

HYMN (Tune 324. Audience singing)

Forward through the ages, in unbroken line,
Move the faithful spirits at the call divine,
Gifts in differing measure, hearts of one accord,
Manifold the service, one the sure reward.
Forward through the ages, in unbroken line,
Move the faithful spirits, at the call divine.

STORIES
OF
THE
BRINGERS
OF
THE
BOOK

(Characters in the Order of Their Appearance)

1. LYDIA - the first Christian in Europe (52 A.D.)

"And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying: 'If ye have judged me worthy to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there!' And she constrained us."

(-Acts 16:14,15)

2. ARMENIAN MARTYR (365 A.D.)

The King of Persia having conquered Armenia gave the people their choice of denying their Christian faith, or persecution and death. They made their choice with an iron will: "Nothing can shake us from our faith, neither angels nor men, neither sword nor fire, nor water, nor all bitter strife. Ask us no more, for our covenant is not with men, but in bonds indissoluble, with God, from whom there is no separation nor departure, neither now nor ever, nor forever, nor forever and ever."

3. CLOTILDA, QUEEN OF THE FRANKS (496 A.D.)

4. BERTHA, QUEEN OF KENT (597 A.D.)
(Queen Clotilda's great-granddaughter)

King Ethelbert to St. Augustine arriving in Canterbury with 40 monks: "These are certainly beautiful words and promises you bring my people; but, because they are new and unproved, I cannot give my adhesion to them and abandon all that I have so long held, in common with everyone else in Britain. But as you have strangers and have come a long way to this country, we do not wish to be unkind to you, and will put no hindrance in your way....." (And within the same year the Venerable Bede adds to this Chronicle): "King Ethelbert did begin to wonder at their simple and innocent lives, and at the charm of their heavenly doctrine."

5. ETHELBERGA, QUEEN OF NORTHUMBRIA (627 A.D.)
(Queen Bertha's daughter)

One of the King's thanes:"Man's present life upon earth, O king, seems to me, when compared with that time beyond of which we know nothing, to be like as if, when you are sitting at supper with your aldermen and thanes in the winter-time, and a fire is lighted in the middle and the hall is warmed; but all outside storms of wintry rain and snow raging, some sparrow were to come and fly very quickly through the house, in one door and out another. During the time that he is inside, he is untouched by the wintry storm, but when the little moment of calm has run out, he passes again from the winter into the winter. So this life of man appears for a little while; but what follows it, and what went before it, we do not know at all. So if this new teaching has brought us anything sure, O King, we should do well I think, to follow it."

(-Recorded by The Venerable Bede)

6. LADY HILDA, THE ABBESS (664 A.D.)

7. BOOKSELLER'S WIFE (1525 A.D.)

"A translatour hath nede to lyve a clene lif, & be ful devout in preiers, & have not his wit ocupied about worldli thingis, that the holy spiryt, autour of wisdom & kunnying & truthe, dresse him in his werk & suffre him not for to erre by this maner, & with good lyving & greet travel, men moun come to trewe & cleer translating, & trewe undurstonding of holi writ, seme it nevere so hard at the bigynnyng. God graunte to us alle grace to kunne wel & kepe wel holi writ, &

suffre ioiefulli sum peyne for it at the laste."
(-Written about John Wyclif's translation in 1389 A.D.)

"Crist & His apostlis taughten ye puple in yat modir tunge yat was moost knowun to ye puple, why shulden men non do so?"
(-John Wyclif)

"God open the King of England's eyes." (William Tyndale, 1525)

HYMN (Tune 324; Everybody singing)
Wider grows the kingdom, reign of love and light,
For it we must labor, till our faith is sight -
Prophets have proclaimed it, martyrs testified,
Poets sung its glory, heroes for it died.
Forward through the ages, in unbroken line,
Move the faithful spirits, at the call divine.

8. LADY-IN-WAITING, COURT OF HENRY THE EIGHTH (1538 A.D.)
Thomas Cromwell in the name of King Henry the Eighth issued this Injunction:
"Item, that ye shall provyde one boke of the whole Bible of the largest volume, in Englyshe, & the same sett up in summe convenyent place within the said churche that ye have cure of, wherever your parishioners may most commodiously resort to the same, & rede yt; the charges of whiche boke shall be ratablie born betwen you the parson and the parishioners aforesaid, that ys to say, the one half by yowe & th'other half by them. Item, that ye discorage no man pryvely or apertly from readinge or hearinge of the same Bible, but shall expresslye provoke, stere, & exhorte every parsone to rede the same, as that whyche ys the verye lively Worde of God that everye Christen man ys bownde to embrace, beleve, & folowe, yf he loke to be saved; admonishinge them to use an honest sobrietye in the inquisition of the true sense of the same."

9. LADY-IN-WAITING, COURT OF KING JAMES (1611 A.D.)
Address to King James, by the translators of "King James Bible":
"To that most high and mighty prince, James, by the grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc. - The Translators of the Bible wish Grace, Mercy, and Peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Great and manifold were the blessings, most dread Sovereign, which Almighty God bestowed upon us the people of England, when first He sent Your Majesty's Royal Person to rule and reign over us. For whereas it was the expectation of many, who wished not well unto our Zion, that upon the setting of that bright Occidental Star, Queen Elizabeth, of most happy memory, some thick and most palpable clouds of darkness would so have overshadowed this Land, that men would have been in doubt how they should walk.....But among all our joys, there was no one that more filled our hearts, than the blessed continuance of the preaching of God's sacred Word among us.....There are infinite arguments of this right christian and religious affection in your Majesty; but none is more forcible to declare it to others than the vehement and perpetuated desire of accomplishing and publishing of this work, which now with all humility we present unto Your Majesty: humbly craving of Your most Sacred Majesty, that since things of this quality have ever been subject to the censures of ill-meaning and discontented persons, it may receive patronage from so learned and judicious a Prince as Your Highness is, whose acceptance of our labors shall more honor and encourage us, than all the calumniations and hard interpretations

of other men shall dismay us. So that if we shall be maligned by self-conceited Brethren, who run their own ways, and give liking unto nothing, but what is framed by themselves, and hammered on their anvil; we may rest secure, supported within by the truth and innocency of a good conscience, and sustained without by the powerful protection of Your Majesty's grace and favour, which will ever give countenance to honest and Christian endeavors against bitter censures and uncharitable imputations."

10. REV. JOHN ROBINSON, FAREWELL SERMON TO PILGRIMS BEFORE SAILING FROM HOLLAND ON MAYFLOWER (1620 A.D.)

"I am verilie persuaded that the Lorde hath more Truthe yett to breake forthe out of His Holie Worde."

(Extract from first royal charter granted by Charles I to Massachusetts Colony):

"That the settlers maie wyne & incite the natives of the countrie to the knowledg & obedience of the onlie true God & Saviour of mankinde, & in the Christian faythe, whiche is our royall intencion & the adventurer's free profession, is the principall ende of this plantacion."

11. MISTRESS ANNE HUTCHINSON (1637 A.D.)

Excommunicated from Massachusetts for daring to "Explain The Worde of God", "banished from out our Jurisdiction as a woman not fit for our Societie"; her husband accompanied her to Rhode Island (where Roger Williams, also excommunicated, gave them shelter) saying: "I am more dearlie tyed to my Wife than to the Churche..... and I do thinke her a Sainte & Servante of God!"

12. AMERICAN INDIAN SQUAW, SACAJAWEA (1790 A.D.)

Nez Percé Indians came 2,000 miles from Rocky Mountains to St. Louis to ask Lewis and Clark for The White Man's Book of Heaven: "I came to you over a trail of many moons from the setting sun. I came with one eye partly open for my people who dwell in darkness. I made my way to you with strong arms, through many enemies and strange lands, that I might carry back much to them. I go back from your great waters and wigwams with both arms broken and empty. When I tell my poor people, in their big council, after one more snow, that I did not get the Book, no word will be spoken. One by one, they will go out in silence. They will die in darkness. No book from white man to make red man's road plain. I am out of words!"

13. THE WIFE OF KRISHNA PAL (1793 A.D.)

William Carey translating the Bible in India: "Attempt great things for God, expect great things from God!" (1793)

Mahatma Gandhi (in London, after a Round Table Conference) "The man to whom I owe most, the man to whom India owes most, is the man who has never set His foot in India, and that man is Christ."

14. MARY MOFFATT LIVINGSTONE (1844 A.D.)

(Warning to her father): "This hostile chief (Africaner) will make drumheads of your skin and use your skull for a drinking cup. Don't go!"

(Africaner about her parents): "These people have ten lives they are so fearless of death."

(Livingstone, in his diary): "Recall the 21 years, give me back all its experiences, give me its shipwrecks, give me its standings in the face of death, give it me surrounded with spears and clubs, give it me back again with spears flying about me, with clubs knocking me to the ground, give it me back, and I will still be Your man, passing on Your Word!"

15. MARY JONES, OF WALES

Chief cause of the founding of the British and Foreign Bible Society; American Bible Society; etc. etc.

16. CHINESE REPRESENTATIVE OF MME. CHIANG KAI-SHEK (1939 A.D.)

ROBERT MORRISON (1807-1834)
BOXER REBELLION (1900)
GENERALISSIMO CHIANG KAI-SHEK (wrote in 1936)

"I have been a Christian nearly ten years and during that time I have been a constant reader of the Bible. Never before has this sacred Book been so interesting to me as during my two weeks' captivity, kidnapped in Sian. This unfortunate affair took place all of a sudden, and I found myself placed under detention without having a single earthly belonging. From my captors I asked but one thing, a copy of the Bible. In my solitude I had ample opportunity for reading and meditation. The greatness and love of Christ burst upon me with new inspiration, increasing my strength to struggle against evil, to overcome temptation, to uphold righteousness."

A year ago the Generalissimo bought $22,000's worth of Chinese Bibles to present to his officers and soldiers, having these words embossed on the covers: "THIS IS THE GREATEST BOOK IN THE WORLD."

17. READER OF ADONIRAM JUDSON'S BIBLE (1813-1939)

18. MRS. ROPES, AND THE BIBLE IN JAPAN (1843-1939)

Placard in all Japanese port cities before 1853: "So long as the sun shall warm the earth, let no Christian be so bold as to come to Japan; and let all know that the King of Spain himself, or the Christian's God, or the Great God of all, if He violate this command shall pay for it with His head!"

Kagawa (1939) "I pray that through my tears Thy Kingdom may one little inch draw near."

19. "GOD'S FROZEN PEOPLE"

HYMN (Tune 324; Everybody singing)

Not alone we conquer, not alone we fall;
In each loss or triumph lose or triumph all.
Bound by God's far purpose in one living whole,
Move we on together to the shining goal.
Forward through the ages, in unbroken line,
Move the faithful spirits at the call divine.

RESPONSIVE READING: The World's Best Seller

Extreme Left Aisle: Remember your leaders; look back upon the close of their careers; copy their faith. (-Hebrews; Moffatt)

Left Center Aisle: Great consequences have flowed from the fact that the first truly popular literature in England - the first which stirred the hearts of all classes of people, and filled their minds with ideal pictures and their everyday speech with apt and telling phrases - was the literature comprised within the Bible. (-John Fiske, "The Beginnings of New England")

Right Center Aisle: Among all the links which bind together the scattered branches of the English-speaking race, one of the very strongest is their common possession of a Book not a single line of which was written, or a single thought conceived, by an Englishman. (Author Unknown)

Extreme Right Aisle: Christians bind the world together. (-Diognetus; 150 A.D.)

Extreme Left Aisle: In the Bible we have profound thought beautifully expressed; we have the nature of boys and girls, of men and women, more accurately charted than in the words of any modern novelist or playwright. You can learn more about human nature by reading the Bible than by living in New York City. (-William Lyon Phelps)

Left Center Aisle: From the standpoint of history and composition, the Bible is the most wonderful book in all literature. Learned men and peasants, kings and farmers, had a hand in its composition. Some of its pages were written in the desert and some by the sea; some in the king's palace and some a shepherd's hut; many of its pages floated out of a prison window in the cramped handwriting of an old man who was a prisoner for conscience's sake. Not far from fifty men had a share in its composition, and nearly a millenium and a half passed between its first writing and its last.

(-Charles L. Goodell)

Right Center Aisle: No other book in the world has such a strange vitality, such an outgoing power of influence and inspiration. Not only has it brought to the countries in whose heart it has been set, new ideals of civilization, new models of character, new conceptions of virtue and hopes of happiness, but it has also given new impulse and form to the shaping imagination of man, and begotten beauty in literature and in other arts. (-Henry Van Dyke)

Extreme Right Aisle: So shall my Word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

(-Isaiah 55:11)

Entire Audience in unison: How hear we, every man in his own tongue wherein he was born, the wonderful works of God? (Acts 2:8)

PERIOD OF SILENT MEDITATION AND PRAYER

Let us dwell with warm delight:

- on the wonder of the Book itself; its fresh vitality; its astonishing grip on the imaginations of all men everywhere.
- on the amazing courage of the brave translators, who in gravest perils, through patient years, have tracked down the potent phrase, the telling word, in each man's mother tongue, until now in over a thousand of earth's living languages the Bible is the world's best seller.
- on our own favorite verses: in joy; in sorrow; in new incentives to work, to share, to lift, to love.
- on the sweetness of memory: the remembrance of verses long dear to us, or strangely stirring.
- on the indelible quality of its vitality: that even if every copy were destroyed today, the immediate reproduction could be made from loving memories, restored sentence by sentence, by tomorrow morning.
- on its perennial source of sermon texts; on its case histories of God's dealings with humankind.
- on the men and women who have published the Word:

"They shall not grow old
As we that are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them
Nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun
And in the morning
We shall remember them."

(Inscription on the British Museum)

HYMN (Tune 76)

From age to age how grandly rise the prophet souls in line!
Above the passing centuries like beacon lights they shine.

*

Through differing accents of the lips one message they proclaim,
One growing bond of fellowship, above all names one Name.

*

Their kindling power our souls confess; though dead, they speak today;
How great the crowd of witnesses encompassing our way.

*

Through every race, in every clime, one song shall yet be heard;
Move onward in thy course sublime, O everlasting Word.

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